



Attendance Policy

Review Frequency	Annual
Most Recent Review	Autumn 2025
Next Review Due	Autumn 2026
Head Teacher	Leah Wright <i>L Wright</i>
Governor	Thomas Boal

Designated Senior Lead for Attendance: Ms. C Mulvany/ Ms. S Upfield
School Attendance Officer: Ms. T Abdelrhman
Local Authority Link Attendance Officer: Ms. D Jacobs

Good attendance begins with our school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn. Good attendance starts with close and productive relationships with parents and pupils. At John Perryn Primary School, we are committed to treating all pupils and parents with dignity. Staff at John Perryn Primary School, are expected to model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance.

Good attendance means coming to school regularly, on time and arriving prepared to learn.

Regular attendance is defined to be in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school.
Supreme Court Ruling April 2017

Regular attendance is attendance at school on each day the school is open for the pupils unless there is an 'authorisable' reason to be absent; ([registration regulations 2006](#). Section 444 of the education act 1996). "If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence." A pupil's Unauthorised Absence is an offence for the parent.

The Department for Education (DfE) expects the school, local authority, and parents to work together to improve attendance. The Summary table in the link below should be read alongside the Working together to improve school attendance guidance. This guidance is statutory, and schools, trusts, governing bodies, and local authorities must have regard to it as part of their efforts to maintain high levels of school attendance: [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

As a school we aim to:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and good time keeping for all children and groups of children
- Maintain a low rate of persistent and severe absenteeism (<90% and <50% attendance)
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of efficient and fulltime attendance.
- Help your child attain their full potential academically and socially

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork, and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attendance encourages responsible learning habits and prepares children for higher education and for their working life
- For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra familial harms, including crime.

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ensuring your child attends school on each day the school is open for the pupils unless there is an 'authorisable' reason to be absent. Only the school can authorise an absence
- Phone in to the school on each day of absence or reporting on Studybugs, with a reason for an absence

- Provide a timely reason, satisfactory to the school, for an absence; otherwise, the absence will remain unauthorised
- Arranging (where possible) all non-emergency medical and dental appointments out of school hours or during school holidays
- **Do not plan any holidays during term time**
- Keeping the school updated by telephone, email, or letter of any changes of circumstances
- Making sure we always have your current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers, email addresses and emergency contact details

Absence should only happen when:

1. Your child is significantly/symptomatically ill and therefore unfit to attend school.
2. There should be an observable symptom/s; 'feeling unwell' is not enough. We may ask for medical verification where absence claimed as illness is frequent, prolonged or where there are absences immediately before or after a school holiday.
3. If there is an unavoidable/unforeseen reason or circumstance which is causing a difficulty, the **school will ask for evidence**.
4. If your child has a documented medical condition that hinders regular attendance, please let us know; the school will ask for evidence in such cases.

If you are leaving the area or changing schools, please complete a **Leaver's Form** (available at the school office). Schools and the local authority are **legally obliged** to track pupils from school to school, even if you are leaving to live abroad. Follow-up enquiries on inadequate information can be intrusive. As well as calls, enquiries include unannounced visits to your given address. We have a duty of care and must follow all guidelines set out by the local authority.

What the school will do:

- While we expect a parent to contact us with a reason for each absence, on occasions, they might forget. Therefore, we will endeavour to call, text, or otherwise contact parents. Schools have a safeguarding role so, on occasion, home visits will be made by school staff or by the Local Authority Link Attendance Officer if a parent cannot be otherwise contacted.
- Where a child has a Social Worker, we will inform them of absences.
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance or punctuality.
- The school will express 'a concern' either verbally or by letter (letter 1). If attendance does not improve or explanations for absence or lateness are unsatisfactory, you may be invited to a meeting following letter 2. The school will also outline what the attendance expectations are and what actions will follow
- We will seek to support you in various ways including:
 - a) We may invite you to participate in an Early Help and Assessment Plan (EHAP)
 - b) You may be invited to agree an Attendance Contract.
 - c) A referral may also be made to external partners, including the Local Authority School Attendance Service, whose officers visit the school regularly to review and support attendance and punctuality issues.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils, who the school (and/or local authority), consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Identify pupils, who need support from wider partners, as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Regularly inform parents about your child's attendance and absence levels.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in the school literature, on our website, at open evenings, in the Home-School Agreement, in pupil's annual reports and during meetings.
- Publish our attendance data on the school website
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance and punctuality by celebrating in assemblies.
- If your child has a documented medical condition, we will wish to discuss this with you. We will devise a care plan with you to support your child in school; this might also require us to refer to the school

Nursing Team or, on occasion, contact your GP/health professional. The school will consider whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, and make referrals in a timely manner, working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support. In some cases, this may include a referral for Alternative Provision.

- Share attendance data regularly with the Local Authority Attendance Service
- Where attendance concerns persist, the school will hold more formal conversations with the parents/carers.
- Escalate the matter to the Local Authority Attendance Service (this includes unauthorised absence due to significant lateness) for prosecution, where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. (Letter 3)

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as 'authorised absences'. That is when the school accept the reason given for absence.

We realise that there are rare and unavoidable occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent, such as sudden bereavement, unexpected parental illness, or a family crisis. If this happens, please let us know and we shall try to deal with the matter sympathetically. Following such incidents, parents are expected to make any necessary arrangements for their child to return to school as soon as possible (ideally the next day). If the absence is likely to be prolonged, parents must write to the Headteacher outlining the reasons.

Please note that when illness is a frequent reason claimed for absence, the school will ask for evidence other than a parent's word to allow for further authorisation of absences.

Absence for **religious observance** will be authorised when it is for a day that is exclusively set apart by the religious body to which the parent belongs. The school will record this using attendance code **R** in line with Regulation 6(2)(b)(ii) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Parents should inform the school in advance of the planned date of observance.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery or repair
- Going for a family day out / Going shopping
- Because you have visitors
- Because you did not know school was open
- Interpreting or supporting a parent at a meeting
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Parent's illness (other than in an emergency)
- Where there is no explanation for an absence, or the school considers the reason given for the absence as unsatisfactory.
- Absence following or prior to a period of school closure (at the end and beginnings of terms and half terms) or following a period of authorised leave, unless satisfactory evidence to justify this has been provided
- Term time holiday – this will be referred to the Local Authority.

Please be aware that unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action. Sanctions for continued, unauthorised absence include warnings, penalty notices (fines) 3*.

Persistent Absence and Severe absence

Once a child's attendance falls to 90% for whatever reason, they are automatically defined by the Department for Education (DfE), irrespective of the reason for absence, as a **Persistent Absentee**. Once a child's attendance falls below 50%, they are termed **Severely Absent**. Both scenarios present a severe problem for pupils. Much of the work they miss when they are off school is never made up, these gaps in their learning leave children at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. Statistics show a direct link between poor attendance and under-achievement, particularly at GCSE.

Persistent absence is a **safeguarding concern**. When a pupil's attendance falls below expected levels, the school will consider whether there are any underlying welfare, safeguarding, or child protection issues. Concerns will be **escalated in line with the school's safeguarding procedures**, and where appropriate, referrals will be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or external agencies.

3* The National Framework for Penalty Notices has introduced a national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered from **19th August 2024**. 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period will now meet consideration for issuing a penalty notice. The 10 school week period may span different terms or school years. Only 2 penalty notices can be issued within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate. A **first penalty notice** is charged at **an increased rate of £160 (if paid within 28 days of issue)**, and **reduced to £80 (if paid within 21 days)**. A **second penalty notice** is charged at a flat rate of **£160 if paid within 28 days with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80**. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, prosecution could be considered. The three-year period begins from the date of the first penalty notice issued on or after 19th August 2024. There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice. Failure to pay will result in prosecution in magistrate's court for irregular attendance, where, on conviction a fine of up to £2,500 may be imposed as well as a record of criminal conviction. Payment of the penalty discharges liability for the offence; it is an alternative to prosecution.

Such low attendance is well below our expectations and, as such, the school will work in partnership with the parent, the Local Authority, and other external partners to support parents to improve matters. In such cases, parents will be offered an Early Help Assessment and might be invited to agree an Attendance Contract with the school or the Local Authority as a way of managing improvement.

Unauthorised Absences are reported to the Local Authority (this includes absence due to significant lateness). The School Attendance Service may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem. The school will then work in partnership with you until matters improve. **Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action**. Sanctions for continued, unauthorised absence include warnings, penalty notices (fines) 3*¹ prosecution in the magistrate's court or an education supervision order through the family proceedings court.

Exceptional Leave - Term Time Leave of Absence

Amendments to the 2006 School Attendance Regulations make it clear that a Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time for holidays. Leave of absence is only granted in exceptional circumstances (e.g., if there is an emergency) at the discretion of the Headteacher and in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the governing body. There is no entitlement to time off during term time.

Only in an exceptional circumstance will term time leave be considered. All leave is granted at the Headteacher's decision. Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence need to complete an application

form well in advance and before booking tickets or making travel arrangements (forms are available at the school office). Parents sometimes confuse 'telling' the school as being good enough; this is not so.

If a child goes abroad during a school holiday period, the parent must make definite arrangements so that they return in good time for school re-opening ([click here for term dates](#)). Absence claimed as illness before or after a school holiday must be reported during the period of absence and medical evidence produced on return to school. Otherwise, the absence will be regarded as unauthorised leave.

If you experience unexpected delays in returning from a trip abroad or within the UK, for whatever reason, the school will require documentary evidence accompanied with proof of original return dates i.e., tickets or an official travel plan showing intent to return on time. Medical Documentation should be in English. In certain circumstances, if a child remains abroad at the beginning of a school term and absence is extended, their school place may be at risk.

- If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised, and you may be liable for a Fixed-Penalty Notice. Where a child's whereabouts cannot be established, they may be regarded as a 'Child Missing Education' and their place cannot be guaranteed.
- Except for leave taken in an emergency, retrospective approval cannot be given without an application having been made. Satisfactory evidence of an emergency will need to be provided.
- A Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent in respect to each of their children, in line with the local authority Fines protocol.

Punctuality

Parents remain responsible for their child's punctuality

Good punctuality is a prerequisite to good learning and shows a respect between pupil, family, and school. Parents remain responsible for their child's punctuality at the start of the school day. Arriving late to school on a consistent basis can have longer-term academic effects. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for the child. If showing up late to school becomes a habit, children may develop the notion that lateness is acceptable behaviour. This belief can negatively impact their future work ethic and employment opportunities.

- Morning registration is at 8:45 a.m. You need to aim for your child to come through the school gate at 8.35 a.m., when they open. The gate closes at 8:45am and from that moment onwards your child is marked as 'late' and must arrive via the school office.
- All lateness is recorded daily. The number of minutes late and the reason for lateness, if known, will also be recorded. This information is discussed at regular meetings with the local authority Attendance Officer and can be made available to the courts in the form of a report should a prosecution be the outcome of repeated lateness.
- Arrival after the close of registration, where there is not an acceptable reason, such as a medical appointment, will be marked as a missed session; unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with the DfE guidance. The U code has the value of an unauthorised absence. When late arrivals are frequent or persistent, we will want to discuss this with you to assess what support or guidance you or your child may need. A referral may also be made to the Local Authority Attendance Service and or other external partners for additional support and monitoring.
- **Please remember that absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in learning. A good understanding of the work and good progress can only take place when the child is in the**

classroom regularly and on time and ready to learn.

GDPR

The school collects and uses attendance data in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Attendance information is stored securely and shared only with relevant agencies, such as the Local Authority and the Department for Education, where there is a legal basis to do so.

This information is used to:

- Monitor individual and whole-school attendance
- Identify pupils who may need support
- Fulfil statutory reporting duties

For more information about how we manage personal data, please refer to the school's **Privacy Notice** on our website.

Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than at the end of Year 6) parents are asked to:

- Give the school comprehensive information about your plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, who your child will be living with and your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing. A Leaver's Form is available from the school office, which you should complete. (A destination country or another named Local Authority without other details is not sufficient).
- When a child leaves and we do not have information about where they have gone/will be educated, then he/she is considered to be a 'Child Missing Education'. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (formerly Social Services), the Police, benefits/council tax records and other agencies, to try to locate your child. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Withdrawals:

- Parents who remain resident locally can only withdraw their children from school if they have a confirmed start date at another school or are undertaking to educate the child at home (Elective Home Education). If the latter, this must be confirmed in writing to the school by the parent. Pupils remain registered at school until such conditions are satisfied.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure efficient and full-time attendance at school of registered pupils of statutory school age (Education Act 1996). This is the legal requirement. The Local Authority School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families and other partnership agencies to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However, in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or are given a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine).

Appendix: Statutory Attendance Codes (DfE 2024)

To make sure attendance is recorded accurately and fairly, we use the **Department for Education's statutory attendance codes**. These codes help us record whether a child is present, late, or absent — and if any absence is authorised or unauthorised. Using the same national codes in every school keeps records consistent and allows the local authority and DfE to monitor attendance properly. All staff responsible for taking registers are trained to use these codes correctly.

Code	Meaning	Category	Notes
*/ *	Present (AM/PM)	Present	Pupils present at registration.
L	Late (before register closes)	Present	Pupils arriving after the register opens but before it closes.
B	Educated off site (not dual registration)	Present	Approved educational activity off site (e.g. alternative provision, trip, tuition).
D	Dual registration	Present	Attending another approved establishment.
J	Interview	Present	Attending an interview with prospective employers or educational establishment.
P	Approved sporting activity	Present	Supervised sporting activity approved by the school.
V	Educational visit or trip	Present	Approved trip or visit.
W	Work experience	Present	For pupils in Year 10 or 11 on approved placement.
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence	Exceptional circumstances agreed with school.
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	Exclusion with no provision.
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	Only in truly exceptional cases.
I	Illness	Authorised absence	School may request medical evidence.
M	Medical/dental appointment	Authorised absence	Must be supported by evidence where possible.
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	Day exclusively set apart by religious body.
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	For Year 11 pupils (short period only).
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence	In line with DfE guidance.
G	Family holiday (not agreed or exceeding agreement)	Unauthorised absence	Term-time holiday not authorised.
N	Reason not yet provided	Unauthorised absence	Should be replaced with correct code as soon as reason is known.
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code)	Unauthorised absence	School does not accept reason given.
U	Late (after register closes)	Unauthorised absence	Late arrivals after register closes without valid reason.
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in attendance	For nursery-aged pupils or pupils not of statutory school age.

Code	Meaning	Category	Notes
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in attendance	E.g. school site closed, transport strike.
Z	Pupil not on roll	Not counted in attendance	Used for admin before admission only.
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Not counted in attendance	E.g. INSET days, polling, emergency closures.

Key Notes

- The register must be taken twice daily: at the **start of the morning session** and during the **afternoon session**.
 - The register must be **closed within 30 minutes** of the start time. Pupils arriving after this are recorded as code **U** unless there's an acceptable reason.
 - Code **N** must only be used temporarily while the reason for absence is being established. It should be amended once the reason is known.
 - Schools must use code **R** for religious observance in line with Regulation 6(2)(b)(ii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
 - All codes must be applied **consistently** by trained staff.
-